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GEORGE WASHINGTON

NATIONAL FOREST

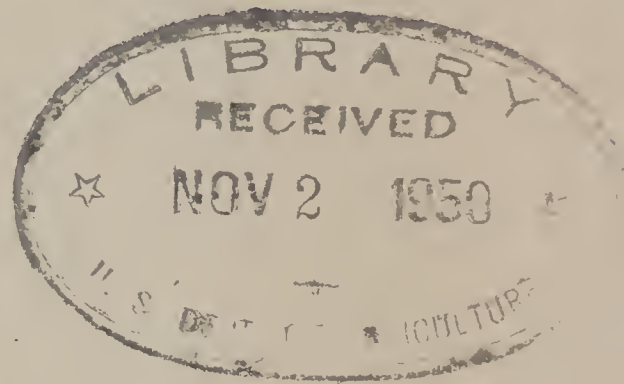
U. S. Department of Agriculture • Forest Service



GEORGE WASHINGTON

National Forest

VIRGINIA-WEST VIRGINIA



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FOREST SERVICE

Eastern Region

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George Washington National Forest is dedicated to the Father of Our Country. Most of its land was familiar to young Washington. He loved it because of his intimate knowledge of its ridges, drafts, and valleys, its unique geology, its wild timbered hillsides and fertile bottom lands, and because he recognized it as the upstream source and protector of his beloved Potomac River. In this area he served as a surveyor, hunter, explorer, and loyal Colonel of the Crown in the Braddock campaigns.

We welcome you to

GEORGE WASHINGTON

National Forest

IN THE UPLANDS of Virginia and parts of eastern West Virginia, embracing the watersheds of the upper James, the Potomac, the Shenandoah and other rivers, is a million acres of woodland administered by the Federal Government. This is one of the oldest and largest of the eastern national forests. Administration and protection of it were begun in 1911.

The George Washington lies in a picturesque area that is a bench mark in American history and tradition. It was frontier and passageway of pioneer and settler, travel-way of roving Indians, neighbor to Jefferson's Monticello, and on less happy occasions the skirmish area and battleground for two wars.

Immediately to the south, and virtually a physical continuation, lies the second great national forest in Virginia—the Jefferson. Flanking the George Washington on the northeast is Shenandoah National Park with its many recreational attractions. Here the excellent and well-known Skyline Drive wends its way along the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains and affords a pleasing array of changing vistas. Continuing these exceptional scenic and recreational opportunities, the George Washington stretches invitingly westward across such mountains as the Blue Ridge, the Massanutten, the Shenandoah, and the eastern upthrusts of the Alleghenies.

These attractions are taken into account in road and other development programs, but the George Washington National Forest is primarily a resource area and is administered as such. In it, experienced foresters from the Forest Service, United States Department of Agriculture, are engaged in the restoration, development, control, and maintenance-with-use of such essential resources as the timber, water supplies, and wildlife.

EARLY SETTLEMENT

This region was settled more than two centuries ago by a few scattered frontiersmen. Heavier flows of migration from tidewater areas and from Pennsylvania began in the 1730's. Later Washington traversed it with troops and eventually included it in his "lands to the west" plans for veterans of the Braddock campaigns. Shenandoah Valley, Page Valley, and the Valley of Virginia to the south, as well as the highlands surrounding these valleys, have since been heavily populated by Anglo-Saxons, Scotch-Irish, Germans, and others that make up our sturdy American stock.

The early residents were good husbandmen. They chose to live in a land that had good soil and grass and abundant timber, water, and wildlife. But the timber sometimes got in the way, and so it was a common practice to clear-

cut areas for homesites, for plowland, and for grazing. Fire was a powerful and positive tool for easy land clearing. As time went on, those who lacked flat lands in the valleys turned to hillside farming. Here again fire and ax encroached on the timbered uplands. Leaching and erosion followed, so fire and ax went farther up the slope to provide more new ground.

In addition to being clear-cut or burned to supply new ground, there was the constant demand upon the forest for white pine, oak, chestnut, and other good lumber for housing, mills, barns, and like uses. And then came the call for ties, poles, posts, fuel wood, and bark for tanning for outside markets. Again with cutting there was waste and indifference toward fire. It was inevitable that the era of devastating cutting and clearing for local purposes, followed by industrial cutting for outside markets, should skim off both the virgin and better second-growth timber.



F-269168

Van Buren Furnace, Cedar Creek, Va., was one of a number in the locality that used the iron ore and charcoal resources in the 1860's.

The human pressure—overcutting of the woods and humus-burning fires—accompanied by overshooting, had turned the forest environment against wildlife. By 1900, native game species, such as Virginia deer and wild turkey, had become scarce. Brook fish disappeared from streams that began to “run-dry” for a part of the year.



F-441959

Scars in the place of crops—protecting forest cover was removed from a hillside too steep to plow.

These water changes particularly were recognized, but they were often passed off by blaming the diminishing undersurface water supply on “different kind of weather.” Some of the more inquiring minds, however, had noted the “wash” left by rain runoff from bare ground as contrasted with the “seep-in” where trees and other vegetation covered the hillsides. Recognizing that poor land management was the basic cause behind parched stream beds and drying springs and wells in their own communities, they readily saw that the increasing flood damage in down-river areas was merely the other side of their own local problem.

THE PUBLIC ASKS PROTECTION

Timber waste and extravagant misuse of land, water, and other resources was going on simultaneously in other areas besides Virginia. Ultimately came the days of realization. Muddy waters and irregular flow—often rampaging floods—in the upstream tributaries of such rivers as the James and the Potomac gave cause for concern in Virginia. Simultaneously, floods along the Allegheny, the Kanawha, the Ohio, the New, the Merrimack, the Connecticut, and other rivers began to attract the attention of Congress.

In 1911 Congress acted by authorizing the purchase in the East of national forest land for the purpose of protecting the headwaters of navigable streams. These lands were to be held and managed for resource conservation—use without abuse—in much the same manner as were the lands in the West that had

earlier been reserved as national forests out of undistributed public domain. In line with western practice and experience, the objective in eastern acquisition was to provide primarily for watershed protection and other forms of forest conservation and to meet special eastern needs for forest restoration. Supporting these primary objectives is a coordinate, multiple-use administration of the national forest lands in the interest of wildlife, recreation, grazing, and other controlled uses conducive to perpetual public enjoyment of the full resource benefits.



Irish Creek.

F-452138

The George Washington was one of the first national forests established in the East. Congress passed the enabling Weeks Act on March 1, 1911. Land examinations looking toward purchase were begun in the upland Virginia areas, now the George Washington National Forest, late in the year 1911. Purchase areas were laid out and designated by such historic names as Potomac, Massanutten, Shenandoah divisions. The acquisition policy was and has remained that of purchase by a willing buyer from a willing seller.

ADMINISTRATION

The line of authority and responsibility for administration of the George Washington National Forest extends upward from the Forest Supervisor to a Regional Forester whose headquarters are in Philadelphia, Pa. The Regional Forester, among other duties, has the responsibility for the general administra-

tion of six other national forests in the Northeastern States. He reports to the Chief Forester, at Washington, D. C., who directs the work of the United States Forest Service.

Since the administration of the forest is under the immediate direction of the Forest Supervisor, he coordinates the work of six Ranger Districts into an over-all forest program. The six District Rangers report to him, and each is responsible for on-the-ground administration of approximately 200,000 acres of forest land. This line of authority from Chief Forester to district ranger constitutes the decentralized form of local administration pioneered by the Forest Service.

Rangers are assisted in the management of the districts by forestry aids, fire dispatchers, guards, and lookouts. Local labor is employed for road and other construction and for forest improvement work. In time of fire, resident wardens gather experienced local crews, previously recruited and trained, and assist the regular forest employees.

Visitors are welcome at the Forest Supervisor's headquarters in the Federal Building, Harrisonburg, Va., and at the following ranger headquarters on the forest: Lee District, Edinburg; Dry River District, Bridgewater; Deerfield District, Staunton; Pedlar District, Buena Vista; Warm Springs District, Hot Springs; James District, Covington.

THE FOREST

The gross boundary or potential purchase area of the George Washington National Forest, as agreed with the State and fixed by the National Forest Reservation Commission,¹ is 1,740,014 acres. Much of this land will never be purchased because it is dedicated to higher uses such as agriculture, towns and settlements, roads, or other purposes. The land area Federally owned in the forest is a little more than 1 million acres; and this will increase some as time goes on, especially as owners agree to sell areas needed for forest consolidation.

Although generally wooded, not all of the owned area is timber-growing land in the accepted commercial sense. Some of the steep mountain slopes and exposed ridges have such shallow soils as to be incapable of growing saw timber or other commercially valuable wood; and usually, it would be unsound land management or a poor business venture to try to log them, if they did. But they constitute critical watershed areas, and their thin, shallow-rooted trees and ridge-type scrub growth must be protected from fire or other damage if their effectiveness for flood runoff reduction, wildlife environment, or other suitable uses is to be maintained.

Some will be surprised to find that the forest is not one continuous expanse of dense, dark wood as depicted in fairy tales. It is rather a fairly continuous series of great wooded areas, frequently broken by roads, rivers, well-farmed, fertile valleys, towns, and smaller settlements. The forest itself is not heavily populated; and this is especially true of the many wooded hillsides and ridges.

¹ Composed of the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, two members of the United States Senate, and two members of the House of Representatives.

Shrubs and wild flowers abound in season. Some of the most colorful or unusual are the redbud, rhododendron, mountain laurel, azalea, trillium, May apple, lady's slipper, dogwood, shadbush, a variety of woodland ferns, and many forms of violets.

The variety of tree species is equally as extensive. Among the more valuable hardwood species are the white, red, and chestnut oaks, yellow-poplar, basswood, hickory, maple, locust, and ash. The conifers include white, pitch,



F-441844

This stand of uneven-aged hardwoods is managed to provide a succession of harvests and a regeneration of its own kind or other commercially valuable trees.

Virginia and table-mountain pines, and hemlock. Scrub oaks, laurel, sumac, and similar growth of low commercial value are also there. They too are protected from fire and even encouraged on those sites where they provide the best available watershed protection or good wildlife environment or both.

Among the more useful trees are the white pine, the red and white oaks, yellow-poplar, and hemlock. They are in demand for construction uses, housing, furniture, railway ties, and general timbers. The outlook is for a continued demand. Therefore, the silviculture practiced endeavors to reproduce and to encourage these species. Some of the poorer formed hardwoods and a heavy growth of Virginia or scrub pine have a ready market for pulpwood, props, or fuel wood in many localities. Black locust is in good demand for fence posts.

Much dead chestnut, killed by a blight which began some four decades ago, still stands. It is cut by local woods operators and sold to nearby wood extract plants, where it provides a good source of tannin.

National forest timber, when ready for sale, is sold standing—"on the stump"—to commercial woods operators or to local users. It may be used domestically



F-232974, 441934

Many local people work part time at woods work and others are employed in nearby wood extract plants.

for lumber, fencing, props, or fire wood. Some of it is used industrially for heating nearby hatcheries and brooder houses, of which there are many. Some is converted by the buyers and sold as lumber or other products in nearby or more distant markets. In practically all cases the felling, milling, and processing provide a livelihood or important cash income for many local people.



F-392729

This mature tree is being marked for harvest. Thrifty young trees of desirable species will be left to put on more growth.

RANGER RESPONSIBILITIES

The district ranger is primarily a land manager. Technically trained, he has been chosen for this assignment because his experience and education specially qualify him for the broad-scale management of large forest areas. His job is to study the land and the possibilities for the highest development, or maintenance, of its resources, with special consideration for the social and economic requirements of the community. Then, after coordinating his plans with those of the supervisor for the whole forest, he applies those principles of management that seem likely to develop and maintain the resources of his district "for the greatest good of the greatest number in the long run."

This was the guiding principle for the Forest Service when it was established in 1905. It calls for a system of multiple-use administration under which all of

the resources, so far as possible, are held in trust and managed for the use or benefit of all the people. In your visit to the forest remember that you are one of its owners—one of the shareholders in all of its resources.



SCS-PA564

The ruffed grouse—a gamey woods bird.

Where conflicts in resource development arise, the District Ranger must determine the dominant and the coordinate and subordinate uses to which the area is suited and to which it should be put. If conflicts of public interest are involved he tries to resolve these, under the principle of the greatest good, so as to provide fairly for local needs and for the needs of more distant communities that may be dependent on or affected by the management applied to the land in his district.

In the field of timber management, the goal of the ranger is to develop good growth where he can and to manage that growth so that it will provide a continuous supply of good forest products. In achieving this goal he must work with the forces of nature. In general, mature and overmature trees are sold and removed to make way for thrifty, younger trees. Also, thinning and weeding operations get rid of poorly formed, defective, diseased, or less useful trees in favor of more valuable growth. Frequent exceptions must be made to this general method of handling timber because of natural obstacles, or because it is

necessary to provide for other requirements such as soil erosion prevention, surface runoff control, wildlife environment, or the maintenance of roadside beauty and other scenic values.

The ranger frequently issues to forest neighbors free cutting rights for a limited number of selected trees to be used for fuel wood or other domestic needs. He is also authorized to make sales to individuals for products not exceeding a value of \$500. Sales above that figure are always advertised and sold on competitive bids. Depending on volume and value, such sales may require the consideration and approval of the supervisor, the regional forester, or even the chief forester.

The purchaser of national forest timber is permitted to cut only trees selected in accordance with the timber-management plan. He is required to avoid setting fire and to cut and log in a manner that will cause a minimum of damage to soil, to stream banks and channels, and to remaining forest growth. He posts a performance bond and must cut without waste. A deposit is also required to cover the cost of restoring the cut-over area to good growing conditions; this includes the proper disposal of brush and the reduction of erosion risks on logging roads and skidways.

Part of the ranger's job is to plan the methods and means for preventing or combating destructive forces, such as fire, insects, and disease; also to prevent timber trespass or other unauthorized use of the forest.

In the matter of fire protection, the ranger is responsible for effecting and implementing a local warden system in which leading local citizens organize fire fighting crews available on call. As well as can be anticipated, the ranger lays out fire-fighting plans, including travel, communications, and food requirements. He provides tools and training for forest employees and warden crews.

The ranger establishes or maintains a fire reporting system, in which local residents participate, and of which some 15 radio- and telephone-equipped fire lookout towers are the backbone. He also organizes and conducts forest fire prevention campaigns in advance of each fire season. These campaigns are carried on by personal contacts, letters, posters, radio and newspaper warnings and are generously participated in by local people, including warden crews, clubs, churches, editors, and radio broadcasters. Some of the fire towers may be open for your inspection during your visit on the forest.

Insects and disease, to the extent to which they can be controlled, often require special measures suited to the area or the specific problem. They are usually abated through cultural cuttings, or through special projects such as the white pine blister rust control program.

Protection against fire, insects, and disease is usually extended to neighboring private lands, especially where the national forest is likely to be endangered.

It is the ranger's duty to apprehend and bring into court anyone who wantonly or carelessly damages the forest. He must investigate all fires and prosecute those responsible for them. He must investigate and prosecute, also, land and timber trespassers and those who make unwarranted use of the forest and its products.



Reddish Knob fire tower.

F-382642

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

One of the scenic pleasures of the western uplands of Virginia is the sudden unveiling of hidden waterfalls recessed against timbered mountainsides hundreds of feet high. Here the little waters are forming to make the great streams, and rainfall is seeping into the ground to provide the underground waters that supply wells and towns in the local valleys and to hundreds of downstream communities. More than a half-dozen major communities in the Shenandoah Valley area obtain uncontaminated and relatively silt-free domestic water supplies from reservoirs high in the hills of the George Washington National Forest. These include some towns you may pass through—Staunton, Lynchburg, Harrisonburg, Clifton Forge, Buena Vista, Stuart's Draft, Woodstock, and Edinburg. Major sources of the James and the Potomac and important tributary rivers are found in these same hills.

In planning for and administering his district, the ranger must consider this all-important resource—the water for our households and industries. He must manage the watershed lands so as to insure an adequate, continuous, and controlled supply of usable water. He must see to it that recreation and other forest uses do not pollute or contaminate the mountain streams. He must prevent so far as possible losses of soil by erosion and the movement of damaging silt into stream beds and reservoirs downstream.

Where the land is covered with vegetation, rain is given a chance to soak into the earth instead of washing off in uncontrolled freshets. This is accomplished partly by the restraining action of the vegetation and partly by the

porous condition of the humus-covered land. This cover action is even more effective in the forest where the trees first break the fall of the rain and where the cover is often a spongy mulch of decayed wood and leaves built up to a thick matting through the years. Even the soil beneath is porous and the root systems of the trees help to lead the water deep into the earth. It is from such earth-held waters that our subterranean water table is formed and our springs and wells get their year-round supplies of cool, sparkling water.



F-441952

An upstream dam.

Maintenance of vegetative cover is, therefore, of utmost importance, and it is given primary consideration in every activity throughout the forest. Such maintenance is one of the principal reasons for exacting fire prevention and fire suppression measures. Logging operations and silvicultural treatments are conducted so as to avoid excessive disturbance of the watershed cover. Road and trail developments, wildlife management programs and recreational improvements, are all planned so as to cause a minimum of disturbance to soil and water-flow stability. The road and bank stabilization you may note as you drive along Passage Creek, or the recreational mountain dam at Sherando Lake that also serves to check excessive flows of Back Creek on its way to the Shenandoah River, are evidence of such careful planning.

Related to water conditions of upland Virginia are the odd geologic formations which account for the presence of many natural caves and the disappearance of at least one river. The geology includes mixed and recurrent upthrusts of sandstone, limestone, and shale. In addition to normal disintegration, the limestone tends to dissolve and wash out in solution leaving fairyland caverns of wondrous subterranean formations. Because of these same conditions, the famous



F-202609

Through the ages the sandstone and limestone at this exposed spot have eroded and dissolved to leave us Chimney Rocks on North River.

Lost River sinks into the earth under Sandy Ridge, west of Wardensville. Those who have traced its course by floating oatmeal say that it emerges at the other side of the ridge as the Cacapon River.

WILDLIFE

Another factor in forest management is the maintenance of satisfactory wildlife environment. On the two national forests in Virginia, wildlife management is a joint undertaking between the State of Virginia and the United States Forest Service. It is handled for the State by the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries and for the Forest Service by the officers of the George Washington National Forest and the Jefferson National Forest under an agreement now known Nation-wide as the Virginia Plan.

The agreement recognizes the common interest of the State in its wildlife although the land where the wildlife is produced belongs to a separate agency, the Federal Government. The agreement, therefore, calls for joint wildlife management planning on the principle that wildlife is a product of the land; that it can be benefited by, and go hand in hand with other phases of good land management; and that good forestry practice can develop a high wildlife carrying capacity on the land.

Under the Virginia plan, technicians from the game commission sit down regularly with the foresters for joint discussions of forest and wildlife requirements and joint planning of management programs. Taken into account are the studies by the game managers of wildlife populations, food supplies, cover conditions, and kill or harvest records. Considered with these are the need for den trees, shade and silt control along fishing streams, forest openings, feed and browse supplies, forest development programs, and fire protection. Under this plan, the State continues to further the wildlife protection and utilization program, including the setting of seasons and bag or creel limits; the Forest Service continues to manage the land, but the two agencies work together in building a better environment and a better wildlife resource.

Resident game managers are employed to carry out the field-work plans in close cooperation with forest officers, and their work is coordinated with other activities on the forest. These game managers provide protection for the wildlife from wild dogs, predators, and poachers. They plant and otherwise encourage growth of special grasses, shrubs and food trees, and do other environmental improvement work. And, to keep constantly abreast of current wildlife requirements, they carry out special studies and make observations on which management plans can be based.

Funds for the conduct of this special work are provided by (1) a tax on ammunition and firearms under the Federal Aid Wildlife Restoration Act; and (2) from the sale by the State of a special \$1 stamp required in addition to the regular license for hunting and fishing on the two national forests. The popularity of this latter arrangement, and the improvements it accomplishes, is attested by the fact that the State sold more than 45 thousand national forest stamps in the last reported season. Public approval of the joint-management arrangement is further attested by the wholehearted cooperation of hunting and fishing groups and individuals. This cooperation has helped to make the wildlife program an outstanding success and the Virginia Plan nationally known.

The Virginia, or white-tailed, deer is the most sought after big game species in the George Washington National Forest area. Black bear is second in popularity. Both are sufficiently numerous to provide good hunting. Wild turkeys are present but are not yet plentiful. The cottontail rabbit and the gray squirrel have an ardent local following throughout the season and there is considerable coon hunting. Ruffed grouse and bobwhite quail are included among the winged game.



F-395284

This wild turkey is not the corner grocery variety. These game birds, once shot out, are now being restocked.



F-380261

An extensive stocking program has been materially effective in restoring white-tailed deer on the forest, and of the many game refuges formerly maintained only two are now considered necessary. These are the Federal refuge on the Big Levels and the State North River refuge. They are devoted primarily to management studies.



F-341421

More than a thousand white-tailed deer have been stocked to fill the "gaps" between existing herds.

There are more than 400 miles of fishing waters on the forest. Trout and bass are among the choice game fish to be taken. Some of the best national forest streams regularly stocked, and famous among local and visiting fishermen, are Passage Creek, Cub Run, Cedar Creek, and Paddy Run on the Lee Ranger District; Dry River, Briery Branch, and North River on the Dry River Ranger District; Ramsey's Draft on the Deerfield Ranger District; Muddy Run, Mare Run, Porters Mill Creek near Beards Mountain, Left Fork of Wilson Creek, and South Fork of Pads Creek on the Warm Springs Ranger District; Smith Creek and Pounding Mill Creek on the James Ranger District; and Mills Creek, Ken-

nedy Creek, Statons Creek, Little Irish Creek, Otter Creek, and Saint Marys River on the Pedlar Ranger District. The Saint Marys River has proved especially adaptable for research work. (See map or inquire at forest or ranger district headquarters for locations.)



A day to be remembered.

F-280464

RECREATION

Recreational opportunities on the George Washington National Forest include scenic drives, hiking trails, picnicking areas, camp grounds, and a recreational area developed for water sports. Scenic roads (see map) offer a variety of views and vistas and include Federal highways, State primary roads, Forest Service highways and development roads which lead through the forest. In addition to these recreational features, extensive opportunities will be found for research or study by botanists, biologists, ecologists, geologists, hydrologists, and others. Camera enthusiasts will find a wealth of outdoor subject matter and nature lovers a wonder world for observation.

Recommended Scenic Drives

The Fort Valley Drive. Between New Market Gap, east of New Market on U S 211, and Waterlick on State Route 55.

The Shenandoah Mountain Drive (known also locally as the *Briery Branch—North River Drive*; and sometimes as the *Reddish Knob Loop*). Reached from Harrisonburg via State Route 42 through Dayton to the Briery Branch road.

After the ascent to Reddish Knob, the drive runs south 11 miles along the crest of Shenandoah Mountain and down the North River Road, coming back on Route 42 through Moscow via Mount Solon. A short branch road at North River Gap leads to some of the North River plantations established in 1927 as a further protection for the water supply of Staunton.

Blue Ridge Parkway (extension of Skyline Drive). Includes extensive mileage through George Washington National Forest between Rockfish Gap at its intersection with U S 250 near Waynesboro and a point several miles south of Irish Gap at the intersection of U S 60, near Buena Vista. The Parkway is administered by the National Park Service.

In addition to the special drives listed here, there are numerous others along forest roads and highways that will be found scenic and pleasing.

Trails

The entire forest is interlaced with a network of foot and horse trails designed primarily for fire protection, but affording unusual recreation opportunities for the hiker and horseback rider. Most famous is a section of the Appalachian Trail—a 2,050-mile wild-land footpath from Mount Katahdin, Maine, to Mount Oglethorpe, Ga.—along the Blue Ridge Mountain crest on the Pedlar District. Trails are well signed and heavily used each year by lovers of the rugged out-of-doors. The entire trail system on the forest exceeds 1,000 miles and is used for administrative purposes, as well as by hunters and other recreationists.



High Knob tower, on Shenandoah Ridge dividing Virginia and West Virginia.

F-441932

Vista Points

George Washington National Forest is located in an interesting geological area of rocky upthrusts threaded by numerous far-reaching valleys. Travel through it provides an almost continuous round of exciting views and inspiring vistas. Among the outstanding points are:

Reddish Knob (elevation 4,398 feet). View over "ridge and valley" formations of Allegheny Mountains in West Virginia. To the east are the crests of the Blue Ridge Mountains; to the south are North and Walker Mountains, with a pattern of intervening hills and farm lands. Parking for cars is provided at the Reddish Knob fire lookout tower.

"*The Viewing Spot*" on the Massanutten ridge above Woodstock. From here can be seen the sweeping seven bends of the Shenandoah River and the surrounding pattern of farm land and settlements in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley. It is near Woodstock Gap on the Massanutten Range, a short walk by trail from Little Fort picnicking area, where ample parking is available.

Signal Knob, at the north end of Massanutten Mountain. Of military significance in the Virginia campaigns of 1861-65. From it are seen broad sweeps of Page Valley and Shenandoah Valley, with the Blue Ridge Mountains to the east and the Shenandoah range to the west.

Elliot Knob (elevation 4,458 feet). One of the dominant peaks of the western Virginia uplands, the highest point on the forest. A 4-mile hike over Forest Service trail which takes off from State Highway 42, a scant mile south of Buffalo Gap.

Points of Interest

Ramsey's Draft Natural Area has approximately 1,750 acres of old and virgin growth—hemlocks and oaks mixed with other species in a natural forest setting. This has perhaps been described most adequately as a sight for those who may *think* they have, but who have actually not seen the big standing sentinels of the forest. It is reached by driving west from Staunton on State Highway 250 to a signed point 3 miles northwest of West Augusta, where the natural area road may be entered.

The North River mixed conifer plantations for the added protection of the watersheds that feed the reservoir for the city of Staunton. These plantations are reached by a short, clearly signed drive off the North River road.

Located in the Staunton area is the blacksmith shop where McCormick invented the grain reaper. Staunton is also the birthplace of Woodrow Wilson.

Passes across the Massanutten Mountain, at the north end of the forest, are said to have been used effectively by Confederate General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson in his tactical maneuvers against Union troops. On this same mountain, in a valley along Passage Creek, it is said that Washington planned a retreat for American troops had they failed at the Battle of Yorktown.

Many prominent military academies, private schools, and colleges are located in the forest neighborhood.



F-441948, 441951

Natural Bridge, one of the world's natural wonders, is located just south of the forest boundary.

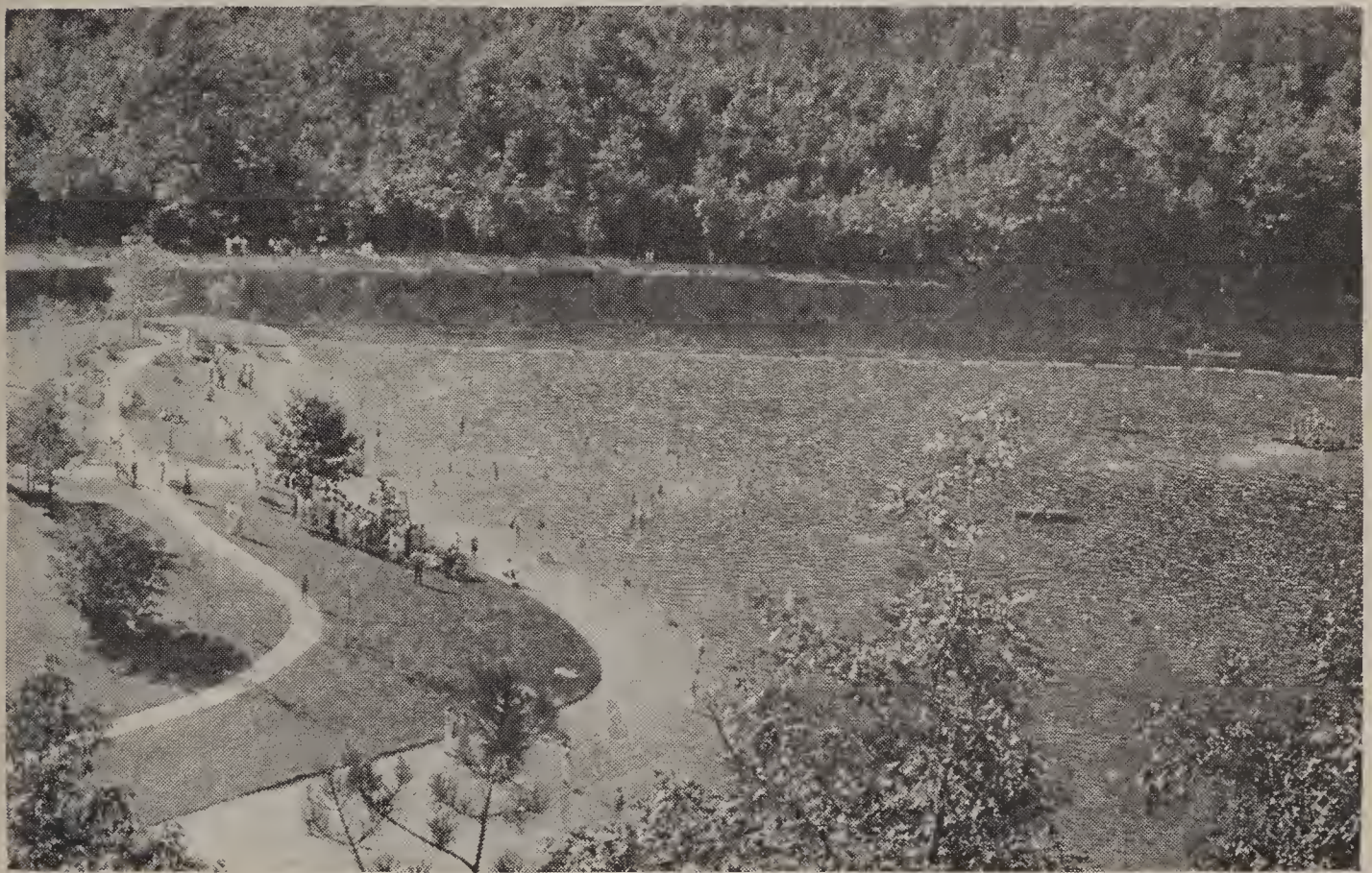
There are many turkey farms and extensive dairy and agricultural lands in the bordering valleys. The area around Winchester, to the north of the forest, is a famous apple-growing country.

Limestone caverns are among attractions occurring in a number of localities. Some have historic significance. Most of them have been developed by their private owners and are open to visitors. Admissions are charged.

Trails and points of interest on the forest are all well marked.

Camp and Picnic Areas

Elizabeth Furnace, along Passage Creek, in Fort Valley (between Routes 55 and 211). Near old ruins of Elizabeth Furnace (iron smelter). Water and parking space available.



F-134908

Sherando Lake Recreation Area where several thousand visitors may be seen on pleasant week ends or holidays.

Hone Quarry, in rugged valley of same name, 18 miles west of Harrisonburg. Isolated and restful. On a short spur of Briery Branch road leading to Reddish Knob. Water and parking space available.

New Market Gap on top of Massanutten Mountain (Route 211) between Luray and New Market. Views overlooking Page Valley. Water and parking space available.

Sherando Lake, 14 miles southwest of Waynesboro. An earth dam creates a magnificent 22-acre lake in a mountain forest setting. Swimming, picnicking,



F-441946

tent camping, and play area. Parking space for 500 cars. In 1949 it became necessary to make a small charge for the use of the camping and picnicking facilities on this area.

Picnic Areas

Little Fort, 7 miles east of Woodstock, near Woodstock Tower. Water and parking space available.

Shenandoah Mountain, 2 miles south of Reddish Knob Lookout Tower on Shenandoah Mountain Drive. Spring water available nearby. Parking space available.

North River, just below the Staunton Reservoir, on a well-marked drive from the North River road. Water and parking space available.

Green Pastures, about 7 miles east of Clifton Forge, reached by U S 60. Picnicking and swimming.

Organization Camps

Existing organization camps are under special use permits to organized church, 4-H Club, Girl Scout, under-privileged children associations and other like groups. Present programs provide for continuous use from June through September.

Powells Fort Organization Camp.—Accommodates 96 campers and 16 counselors, and consists of 8 bunkhouses, a dining hall and kitchen, wash houses, shower house, toilets, infirmary, a swimming pool, and several playfields.

Sherando Organization Camp.—Accommodates 42 campers and consists of 3 bunkhouses, an outdoor terrace dining hall, kitchen, wash houses, toilets, and staff quarters.



The noon meal line-up at Sherando Lake Organization Camp.

F-441922

YOUR VISIT

It is our earnest hope that our visitors will observe and make special note of the important part which these publicly managed timberlands can and do play in maintaining the more regular flow of streams and in preventing rapid runoff, the forerunner of floods; in reducing erosion and siltation of reservoirs and stream valleys; in providing a continuing source of high-quality forest products, raw material for industry, income for local people, recreation for the public, and the natural environs for fish, game, and other forms of wildlife.

To these areas and to these exciting mountain views, the Forest Service welcomes you. It knows that you, as one of its 150 million owners, will respect this public property, and that you will assist in preventing forest fires, will properly use the facilities provided, and will leave the areas you use in a condition for further enjoyment by your fellow owners.

The supervisor and foresters of the George Washington National Forest want you to enjoy your visit. They want you to come often, and to bring your friends. Within the limits of available funds, the Forest Service will continue to develop and maintain this forest for public service, use, and enjoyment.

GEORGE WASHINGTON NATIONAL FOREST

Virginia-West Virginia

NORTH HALF

(SOUTH HALF SHOWN ON BACK OF THIS SHEET)

Scale of Miles
1 1/2 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



The "eyes" of a vast fire detection system overlook every ridge and valley.

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NATIONAL FOREST
HARRISONBURG
VIRGINIA

Legend

- PROCLAIMED
NATIONAL FOREST
- RANGER DISTRICT
BOUNDARY
- FEDERAL HIGHWAY
NUMBER
- STATE & COUNTY
HIGHWAY NUMBER
- MAIN MOTOR ROADS
- OTHER MOTOR ROADS
- UNIMPROVED ROADS
- TRAIL
- RECREATION AREA
- FOREST SERVICE
ROAD NUMBER



Reddish Knob Road
on the Virginia, West
Virginia State Line.
Built primarily for
fire protection, it
offers surpassing views
of the Alleghenies.

Timber is a crop.
Harvested wisely
it becomes a steady
source of income
to local communities.

The Gorge of Passage Creek—northern entrance to
Fort Valley. Washington had planned a last stand
in this natural fortress in case of defeat by the British.

CAMPING AT
ELIZABETH FURNACE RECREATION AREA

CATHERINE FURNACE—
Iron furnaces of this type were operated
from 1848 to 1863. Charcoal was used as
fuel—and much of the early timber in this
region was cut by charcoal burners.

The headwaters of two
great rivers, the Potomac
and the James, rise under
the protecting cover of
the George Washington
National Forest.

Here, in 1716, Gov. Spotswood
and his Knights of the Golden
Horsehoe crossed the Blue
Ridge Mountains.

